

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**SESDAC, Inc.  
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2006**

**Team Members:** Peggy Mattke and Becky Cain - Special Education Programs

**Dates of On Site Visit:** June 22, 2006

**Date of Report:** July 31, 2006

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This report contains the results of the compliance review completed by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

<b>Promising Practice</b>	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
<b>Meets Requirements</b>	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
<b>Out of Compliance</b>	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
<b>Not applicable</b>	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

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<b>Principle 1 – General Supervision</b>
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General supervision means the school district and the agency's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

**Meets Requirements**

The reviewers found SESDAC meets the requirements in all areas of general supervision. Two out of two student files were reviewed at the agency. Documentation was found in both that showed continuing involvement with the sending school districts in order to provide special education services to the students. The school districts are responsible for three year

reevaluations, annual meetings, sending prior notices, and the agency is responsible for medical and life skills testing.

## **Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education**

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

### **Meets Requirements**

It is the responsibility of school districts to provide a free appropriate public education to students from birth to age 21 within their attendance boundaries. SESDAC also functions as the service provider to students with disabilities that are placed by the school districts. The agency meets all requirements with respect to the requirements of a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

## **Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation**

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

### **Meets Requirements**

The agency meets all requirements with respect to appropriate evaluation. Consent is obtained by the district. All evaluations reviewed in the students' files were sufficiently comprehensive to plan the students' education programs

## **Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards**

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school district and the agency makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

### **Meets Requirements**

SESDAC meets all requirements with respect to procedural safeguards. The team concluded that parents are informed of their parental rights. Parents have been informed of all relevant consent information in their native language. Parents have the opportunity to access and inspect applicable student records. The agency has policies and procedures to prevent unauthorized disclosure of personally identifiable information pertaining to children with disabilities. The agency has procedures within the comprehensive plan which meet the requirements of surrogate

parent appointments. The agency's comprehensive plan has policies and procedures for responding to complaint and due process hearings.

## **Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program**

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

### **Promising Practice**

The agency should be commended in having a client centered environment. The agency reorganized the services to discontinue the traditional components of “residential” and “vocational” staff. The agency implemented a staffing pattern that included staff being scheduled to work based on their employment needs (part-time vs. full-time, evenings vs. days, etc.) and the needs to the client they support. During any given shift, a staff person is expected to complete activities based on the people they support and their needs at that time. As the day progresses, the staff may then need to support clients in day services, volunteer activities, or employment activities. Day services activities include fitness, socialization through games or other turn taking activities, music appreciation, reading groups, sensory integration, and volunteer activities such as watering plants for businesses around the community.

### **Meets Requirements**

SESDAC meets requirements with respect to annual IEP meetings, IEP membership, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs and IEP related issues. The school districts invite the appropriate members. Contacts are made with the parents to secure their involvement as well.

### **Needs Improvement**

SESDAC staff does monthly and quarterly progress monitoring reports, but they are not consistently sent to the parents or districts to be sent to the parents as frequently as general education students. Staff is now aware of this and will send quarterly reports to the school or parents in the future.

## **Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment**

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

### **Meets Requirements**

SESDAC meets all requirements with respect to least restrictive environment. The reviewing team toured the facility and observed the programs available, such as daily activities rooms, sensory integration rooms, and exercise rooms. Placement for the students is appropriate for their needs at this facility.